



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

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*Testimony of the Department of Motor Vehicles  
Transportation Committee Public Hearing  
March 11, 2009*

### **Raised Bill No. 6647 AN ACT CONCERNING ON-BOARD DIAGNOSTIC EMISSION TESTING**

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) would like to highlight some of the provisions included in House Bill 6647, *An Act Concerning On-Board Diagnostic (OBD) Emission Testing*, as these proposed changes could impact hundreds of thousands of Connecticut drivers.

First and foremost, this legislation revises the current emissions exemption for motor vehicles that are up to four years old to only allow an exemption for vehicles that are two years-old or newer. This change is of limited benefit because the vast majority of these "new" vehicles are not polluters, and vehicles that are exempt still pay \$40 (the same cost as if they were tested twice during those 4 years) to help cover the costs of running and administering the Emissions Program. While an estimated 500,000 more vehicles may be added to the testing population, there will be minimal, if any, value to improving air quality.

Second, there is an added requirement that there be an "electronic maintenance inspection of safety belts, air bags, anti-lock brake system and drivetrain". Although the legislation seems to imply that this equipment can be easily assessed using OBD technology, it is the Department's understanding that only some of the model year 2003 and newer vehicles have this capability. Vehicles that are model year 2002 and older may have a different protocol for ascertaining this information; however, there is no standardization and questionable benefit for this test. The fee for this plug-in inspection would be established by the commissioner and may be between \$5 and \$15.

Third, the bill would exempt vehicles that are model years 1995 and older from emissions testing, changing the existing exemption for "vehicles manufactured twenty-five or more years ago". By removing eleven years from the testing population, vehicles that the federal government has identified as most in need of repair, Connecticut's compliance with EPA regulations, as part of our State Implementation Plan, could ultimately be jeopardized. This critical point is emphasized in the Department of Environmental Protection's testimony.

Lastly, worth mentioning are the proposed fee structure changes. Costs of the emissions inspection could be increased to \$40 every two years (from \$20), and language mandating any excess costs to running the Emissions Program be borne by the state is repealed. This is language that the federal government requires to ensure that state governments can not simply eliminate funding for emissions testing, and the repeal of lines 286 to 289 would again put the state out of compliance with the federal requirements.

DMV hopes to have the opportunity to discuss these changes with members of this Committee and is available to answer any questions on this issue.

Seat Belts Do Save Lives